United Nations A/61/137

General Assembly

Distr.: General
12 July 2006

Original: English

Sixty-first session
Agenda item 88 (f) of the preliminary list*
Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly

United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains an account of the activities undertaken by the Regional Centre to implement its mandate during the period from July 2005 to June 2006.

During the reporting period, the Centre continued to face two major challenges: the lack of a reliable source of funding that would ensure the sustainability of its operations; and the need to review its mandate and programmes in the light of developments in the field of peace and security in Africa since its establishment.

To address both issues and pursuant to the request of the General Assembly contained in resolution 60/86, the Secretary-General established, on the basis of existing resources, a consultative mechanism of interested States, in particular African States, for the reorganization of the Centre. During the reporting period, the mechanism held three meetings to review the mandate, the programme of work and the funding situation of the Centre with a view to formulating concrete recommendations to strengthen its operations and ensure its viability.

* A/61/50 and Corr.1

06-42719 (E) 010806

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/86, by which the Assembly, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to establish, on the basis of existing resources, a consultative mechanism of interested States, in particular African States, for the reorganization of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa; to continue to provide the Regional Centre with the necessary support for better achievements and results; to facilitate close cooperation between the Regional Centre and the African Union, in particular in the areas of peace, security, disarmament and development; to continue to provide assistance towards stabilizing the financial situation of the Centre; and to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session on the implementation of the resolution. The report covers the period from July 2005 to June 2006. A financial statement on the status of the Trust Fund for the Centre for the biennium 2004-2005 is contained in the annex.

II. Functioning of the Centre

2. The Regional Centre was established in 1986 pursuant to General Assembly resolution 40/151 G. Its headquarters is located in Lomé. The Centre functions within the framework of the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, which ensures its supervision and acts as the focal point for coordinating the input of the pertinent organs, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system. The Centre operates on the basis of existing resources within the Secretariat and on voluntary contributions that Member States and other donors offer.

3. During the reporting period, the Centre continued to operate under enormous uncertainty owing to a persistent decline in voluntary contributions in support of its activities. Within its limited financial resources, the Centre implemented its programme of work in the following main areas: peace and security; arms control and practical disarmament; research, information and publication; and cooperation with regional, subregional and civil society organizations.

III. Objectives and activities of the Centre

4. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 40/151 G, the Centre is mandated to provide, upon request, and in cooperation with the African Union, substantive support for initiatives and other efforts of the Member States of the African region towards the realization of measures of peace, arms limitation and disarmament in the region, as well as to coordinate the implementation of regional activities in Africa under the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme.

5. During the reporting period, the Centre carried out a number of activities in the four areas mentioned in paragraph 3 above.

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A. Peace and security

6. Peace and security remained a core element of the activities of the Centre. The Centre participated, from 11 to 14 April 2006, in the series of meetings which the Security Council Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire conducted in Lomé, as part of the Group's multi-country visits to West Africa to gather information relating to States' compliance with the Security Council arms embargo on Côte d'Ivoire. The Centre provided the Group with logistical support which included office space, transportation and interpretation during the meetings.

7. In pursuance of the civil-military relations programme which it launched in 2001 in collaboration with the Commission of the African Union (AU) and other partners, the Centre developed an African security sector reform programme, a project proposal targeting 12 African countries that have either experienced functional disarticulations in civil-military relations or have emerged from armed conflicts. The programme enjoyed the support of a number of partners including the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme, France and the United States, in particular with regard to its pilot implementation in Togo.

8. In the context of its security sector reform programme, the Centre provided technical support to the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces in formulating and adopting a Code of Conduct for the Armed and Security Forces in West Africa. This initiative, which drew from the Centre's draft code of conduct for the armed and security forces in Africa, formulated in 2002, consisted of the organization in Accra, in October 2005, of a Preparatory Meeting of Experts to adapt the draft code of conduct to West Africa in the framework of the executive secretariat of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The Accra meeting was followed, in April 2006 in Lomé, by an ECOWAS meeting of governmental experts organized by the Geneva Centre to review and adopt for submission to the ECOWAS Council of Ministers for further consideration the draft code of conduct for the armed and security forces of West Africa.

9. The Centre collaborated with the Sahel and West Africa Club of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development in the organization of a workshop on human security in West Africa, in Lomé, from 28 to 30 March 2006. The workshop, with the Centre's logistical and substantive support, was organized under the auspices of the ECOWAS executive secretariat. It brought together governmental experts and representatives of relevant civil society organizations to review the state of human security in West Africa and make recommendations for a programme of action. The Centre and the Sahel and West Africa Club continued discussions on follow-up activities based on the recommendations of the workshop.

B. Arms control and practical disarmament

10. During the period under review, the Regional Centre maintained contacts and exchanged information with the following organizations: the International Atomic Energy Agency on the nuclear safeguards regime in Africa; the provisional secretariat of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization on the promotion of the early entry-into-force of the Treaty; and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons regarding a comprehensive and effective implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in Africa.

11. The Centre discussed with Nigeria, Togo and the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa ways and means of promoting the entry into force of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaty (the Pelindaba Treaty), including such proposals as the organization of national awareness campaigns with African Government officials and members of parliaments; a regional conference and a capacity-building workshop. The proposals were reflected in the Centre's work programme which was submitted to the consultative mechanism for the reorganization of the Centre (see sect. V below).

12. The Centre continued to provide support to African States and African regional organizations and civil society for the implementation of the Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons.

Small arms transparency and control regime in Africa project

13. The Centre completed the implementation of the activities contained in the small arms transparency and control regime in Africa project in the following priority areas:

Inventory of the small arms and light weapons and ammunition production capacities of the participating States

14. This activity consisted of conducting a national survey on the production of both artisanal and modern firearms in each of the States participating in the project; the recruitment of one national consultant; the organization of field missions by the national consultant in the major production sites that had been pre-determined under the supervision of the national commission or national focal point for the control of small arms and light weapons; and the submission of a report on the findings of the survey.

15. The findings revealed that there were modern industries for the production of small arms and light weapons in South Africa, and to a lesser degree, in Nigeria; that there were artisanal factories of firearms in Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa and Togo; and that there were no known production activities in Djibouti and Gabon. In most cases, production activities were clandestine or were not regulated by law. Locally manufactured weapons were increasingly used in criminal acts and were losing their traditional cultural values. The quantity of the firearms produced as well as their technical specifications varied from one country to another.

Establishment and maintenance of an arms register and a database on SALW in Africa

16. The Centre established a small arms and light weapons register for Africa and a database on small arms and light weapons. The following eight categories of data to be reported upon were adopted by the participating States: importation, exportation, manufacture, holdings, collection and destruction, donations, surpluses and licenses. While the data contained in the register were submitted exclusively by the Governments of the participating States, those contained in the database were collected by the Centre from general sources. Access to the arms register is restricted to the participating States but the database is open to the general public through the following link http://www.unrec-satcra.org.

17. The final activity report was published and disseminated to the 10 States participating in the project as well as to donors and other interested institutions and individuals. The report, which can be obtained online at http://www.unrec-satcra.org, features accomplishments in the three areas of the project's activities, namely: the promotion of transparency in transfers and manufactures of small arms and light weapons in the participating States; the national inventories of the local capacity for the production of small arms and light weapons; and the establishment of the database and small arms register. The report is available on compact disc and in hard copy.

Moratorium of the Economic Community of West African States on the importation, exportation and manufacture of light weapons

18. The Centre continued to support ECOWAS in the implementation of its moratorium on the importation, exportation and manufacture of light weapons and provided technical expertise to West African civil society in Bamako for the organization of a civil society workshop on a review of a draft text of a convention for the control of small arms and light weapons in West Africa. The Centre, in collaboration with Oxfam Great Britain and the West African Action Network on Small Arms, had contributed to the preparation of a draft text.

19. The Centre facilitated the process to transform the ECOWAS moratorium on the importation, exportation and manufacture of light weapons into a convention through chairing and participating in the meeting of independent experts in Abuja, on 9 and 10 March 2006, to review the draft convention, as well as in the meeting of the ECOWAS Council of Ministers in Bamako, from 29 May to 6 June 2006, to examine and adopt the draft convention. The convention was approved for signature by the ECOWAS Extraordinary Conference of Heads of State and Government on 14 June 2006.

Support for national commissions for the control of small arms and light weapons

20. The Centre has continued to provide support to African countries in the establishment and/or strengthening of national institutions for the control of small arms and light weapons. During the reporting period, support was provided, in particular, to the national commissions of Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Gabon, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa and Togo in the context of implementing the transparency and control regime project. In addition to liaising with the national commissions on data collection matters, the Centre provided technical expertise to the Nigerian national commission for the organization of a training programme on enhanced stockpile management and control in Nigeria, held in Kaduna, Nigeria, on 4 and 5 May 2006.

C. Research, information and publication

21. The Centre continued to offer graduates and researchers in the areas of peace, security and disarmament in Africa places in its internship programme. During the reporting period, interns and researchers were received from the International Relations Institute of Cameroon, conducting research on the status of the implementation in Africa of the recommendations contained in the report of the

Secretary-General on "The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa", from the Georg-August-Universität, Göttingen, Germany, working on the promotion of civil-military relations matters in Africa; and from the University of Lomé also working on civil-military relations matters, with a focus on Togo.

22. The Centre also continued to maintain and improve its website (www.unrec.org). Substantial work was undertaken to redesign the English and the French versions of the site. New pages and links to partner institutions were being set up to facilitate and expand the readership of the site.

D. Cooperation with regional, subregional, civil society organizations and entities of the United Nations system

23. During the period under review, the Centre cooperated with regional and non-governmental organizations in the field of peace, security and disarmament in Africa. That cooperation took the form of exchanges of programmes and information, and provision of technical advice and expert services, particularly with regard to the drafting of concept papers, project documents and conference reports.

24. Cooperation was maintained with the Commission of AU in following up on joint activities, including the draft code of conduct for the armed and security forces of African States, which had been under consideration by the Commission for formal adoption by African Governments; and on a draft memorandum of understanding on joint activities which the Centre had submitted to the Commission for review. Cooperation between the two institutions resulted in the adoption by the Executive Council of the African Union of decision EX.CL/243 (VIII) Add.7, by which the Council requested the Commission to examine the proposal by Togo regarding the Centre and make recommendations on support for the Centre, and called upon its member States to make voluntary contributions to the Centre to maintain its operations, pending recommendations by the Commission and adoption of a decision by the policy organs of AU.

25. Cooperation with Oxfam Great Britain was reinforced during the reporting period through the initiation of a proposed one-year joint project on the elaboration of training materials and the organization of a training-of-trainers workshop on peacebuilding and practical disarmament for civil society and grassroots organizations. Funding for the project was being provided by the Swedish International Cooperation Agency through Oxfam Great Britain.

26. The Centre continued its cooperation with the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces, within the framework of the Centre's security sector reform programme and, in particular, in the context of adopting regional codes of conduct for the armed and security forces in Africa.

27. In Togo, the Centre worked with the national commission to set up computerized facilities for data collection on the flow of weapons in the country and jointly to organize a meeting for the launching of the small arms transparency and control regime in Africa database, the project's final activity report and the inventory of national capacities for the production of small arms and light weapons in Togo.

28. In preparation for the United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the Centre provided organizational and substantive support to the Togolese Réseau National d'Action sur les Armes Légères, in the organization of a workshop entitled on the control of trafficking in small arms and light weapons, in collaboration with the Togolese national commission, on 22 and 23 May 2006.

29. The workshop provided an opportunity for the Government and civil society to review Togo's accomplishments in the implementation of the Programme of Action. It enabled the Government, particularly through the national commission, to formulate its report to be presented to the Review Conference.

30. The Centre initiated a partnership programme with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. Specifically, the programme aimed at developing an interregional cooperation initiative to facilitate the transfer to Africa of the knowledge, skills and best practices from the law enforcement training courses on the control of the legal firearms trade and its illicit trafficking, developed by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, Interpol, the University for Peace and the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission of the Organization of American States in Latin America and the Caribbean. That initiative would cover the transfer of all the tools developed by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean and its partners to organize training-of-trainers courses in the region, including a training kit with a detailed user's guide, procedure manuals, samples and a complete database system to facilitate the organization of various courses simultaneously. The initiative will also include the adaptation of an African regional training course help desk to assist Member States, the United Nations and Interpol in the development of courses in Africa. The organization of a series of workshops in various subregions of the two continents will ensure the transfer of knowledge and lessons learned.

IV. The operational situation of the Centre

A. The financial situation

31. Financial resources for the Centre's operations have been dwindling steadily over the years. While some limited funds were received for the execution of projects, unfortunately contributions in support of the operational costs of the Centre were not forthcoming. Those costs are related to maintenance expenses and salaries for the local staff and security.

32. During the reporting period, the financial situation seriously worsened. At the sixtieth session of the First Committee, the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, at an informal meeting devoted to the issue of regional disarmament, informed the Committee that consultations conducted by the Department for Disarmament Affairs with Member States regarding the possibility of temporarily regrouping the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa with existing United Nations operations in their respective regions, namely the Economic

and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok, and the United Nations Office at Nairobi or the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, yielded inconclusive results. The Under-Secretary-General further informed that there were still differences of views among Member States and that he intended to continue his consultations on the matter.

33. In the meantime, the Department for Disarmament Affairs continued to focus its efforts on identifying ways and means of ensuring the operational sustainability of the Centre, with particular attention given to solutions highlighting efficiency and cost-effectiveness, as well as to the demands and needs of the African region. Extensive fund-raising activities were carried out by the Director of the Centre and the Chief of the Regional Disarmament Branch of the Department for Disarmament Affairs. The Centre reached out to potential donors and partners and developed a number of funding proposals within the framework of its work programme.

34. By its decision EX.CL/243 (VIII) Add.7, adopted at Khartoum in January 2006, the Executive Council of the African Union appealed to its member States to make voluntary contributions to the Centre to maintain its operations, pending recommendations by the Commission and adoption of a decision by the policy organs of the African Union on sustaining the viability of the Centre.

35. During the reporting period, voluntary contributions to the Centre's Trust Fund had dropped to only US$ 3,326.81. The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to the Government of Cameroon for its financial contributions, and to the Government of Togo, the host country, for its overall support for the Centre and its financial contribution.

B. Staffing

36. Owing to insufficient financial resources, the size of the staff of the Centre during the reporting period was further reduced. The Centre continued to operate under strenuous staffing conditions comprising, in addition to the Director, four General Service staff and two locally recruited short-term consultants. The difficult staffing situation has been compounded by the unpredictability of financial resources, which makes it impossible for the existing staff to be offered longer-term contracts.

V. Consultative mechanism for the reorganization of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa

37. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/86, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa", a consultative mechanism for the reorganization of the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa was established. It held three meetings on 5 May, 5 June and 12 June 2006 respectively in New York.

38. Using a paper prepared by the Chairman containing a list of recommendations on the reorganization of the Centre as a basis, participants exchanged views and discussed how to solve the Centre's problems with regard to its programme of work

and funding. Several delegations underlined the need for the Centre to align its programme of work closely with the priority issues of the African countries in the field of disarmament and security. Some participants were of the view that the mandate of the Centre, established in 1986, was no longer valid with respect to the current situation in Africa, while others considered the mandate still valid and saw no need to address it. It was pointed out that the lack of funding was at the core of the Centre's problem and that the development of meaningful projects could generate the resumption of funding. Participants were of the view that the staffing situation needed to be improved to allow the Centre to function properly and to respond to the needs of African countries. Several delegates were ready to submit concrete proposals to supplement the Chairman's paper. During the discussions, two specific proposals were put forward to address the immediate needs of the Centre: (a) the establishment of two additional posts to be funded from the regular budget; and (b) allocation from the regular budget of an annual subvention to cover the difference between the contribution of the host country and the actual operating costs of the Centre. Since the discussions were inconclusive, it was agreed that participants in the mechanism would meet again in July with a view to finalizing a list of concrete recommendations.

VI. Conclusion

39. **During the reporting period, the Centre continued to face two major challenges: the lack of a reliable source of funding that would ensure the sustainability of its operations and the need to review its mandate and programmes in the light of developments in the field of peace and security in Africa since its establishment.**

40. **The activities and staffing of the Centre have been reduced in order for it to operate within the available limited resources. Notwithstanding, the future of the Centre looks bleak, as there is no foreseeable reliable source of funding that would ensure its operational sustainability.**

41. **It is hoped that concrete recommendations of the consultative mechanism on the staffing and operating costs of the Centre will be adopted and implemented so as to offer a solution to the current situation and enable the Centre to effectively fulfil its mandate in responding to the demands and needs of Africa in the field of peace and disarmament.**

Annex

Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa for the biennium 2004-2005

	United States dollars
Fund balance, 31 December 2003	445 093
Income, 1 January 2004-31 December 2005	
Voluntary contributions[a]	648 601
Interest income	24 405
Other/miscellaneous income	3 249
Subtotal	**1 121 348**
Expenditures 1 January 2004-31 December 2005	847 442
Fund balance, 31 December 2005	**273 906**

Note: Information based on the statement of income and expenditure for the biennium 2004-2005 ending 31 December 2005. During the period from 1 January to 30 June 2006, no contributions were received.

[a] In 2004, contributions were received from: Austria ($10,000), Finland ($219,074), France ($94,979), Namibia ($1,000) and Togo ($202,970). In 2005, contributions were received from: Cameroon ($3,327), France ($98,953) and Togo ($18,298).